

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 05875 091025Z
ACTION NODS-00

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S E C R E T TEL AVIV 5875

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS
FOR THE SECRETARY FROM LEWIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS)
SUBJECT: MAJOR MILITARY INCURSION BY ISRAEL THREATENS IN SOUTH LEBANON

1. DAYAN ASKED ME TO SEE HIM THIS MORNING AT HIS HOME IN TEL AVIV. THE MESSAGE WAS SIMPLE AND BLUNT. THE ISRAELIS WILL NO LONGER TOLERATE WHAT THEY VIEW AS INCREASING PALESTINIAN PRESSURE ON THE CHRISTIAN FORCES, AND ARE ON THE POINT OF LAUNCHING A MAJOR INCURSION INTO SOUTH LEBANON TO "CLEAN OUT THINGS" AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING. BEGIN PLANS TO DISCUSS THIS IN DETAIL WITH YOU, BUT DAYAN HAD PERSUADED HIM THAT HE SHOULD GIVE ME AN ADVANCE INDICATION OF THEIR INTENTIONS.

2. DAYAN INSISTED THAT THEY HAD NO PLAN TO OCCUPY TERRITORY PERMANENTLY, BUT HE GAVE ME THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS ENTERPRISE WOULD RESULT IN MORE THAN JUST A FEW HOURS STAY ACROSS THE BORDER. AT MY INSISTENCE, HE ASSURED ME THAT NOTHING WOULD HAPPEN BEFORE YOUR MEETING HERE WITH BEGIN, BUT EVERY INDICATION WAS THAT TIME FUSE IS SHORT. I ARGUED VIGOROUSLY AGAINST ANY SUCH ENTERPRISE, MUSTERING ALL AVAILABLE

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ARGUMENTS DRAWN FROM BEGIN'S RECENT REPORTING ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF LEBANESE FORCES MOVING SOUTH IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE, BUT I OBVIOUSLY DID NOT PERSUADE HIM THAT FURTHER DELAY FOR UN OR LEBANESE FORCES TO BE INSERTED WOULD PRODUCE THE DESIRED RESULT.

3. YOU SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR A DETAILED DISCUSSION

ON THIS TOPIC, AND I SUGGEST THAT THE DEPARTMENT
PROVIDE IMMEDIATELY FOR YOU ALL AVAILABLE INTELLIGENCE
SUPPORT ON WHAT IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING, PARTICULARLY
WITH REGARD TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW AGREEMENT.
DAYAN AND I DISCUSSED WHETHER THE LEBANESE
SITUATION SHOULD BE TAKEN UP AT THE FIRST MEETING
THIS AFTERNOON OR TOMORROW'S MEETING. IT MIGHT BE
BEST TO GO FIRST INTO THE MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS
ISSUE, TAKING UP LEBANON AFTER THIS GENERAL FRAME-
WORK IS ESTABLISHED, IN ORDER TO UNDERSCORE THE
IMPACT ANY MILITARY ACTION WOULD HAVE ON THE PEACE
PROCESS.

4. I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO DIVINE SINCE LEAVING DAYAN'S
HOUSE WHAT THE ISRAELIS ARE UP TO. ONE UNHAPPY
HYPOTHESIS WOULD BE THAT THEY ARE NOW INDEED WORRIED THAT
THE PLO IS ON THE POINT OF ACCEPTING RESOLUTION 242,
WHICH COULD PRODUCE A MAJOR SPLIT BETWEEN US AND THE
ISRAELIS. ONE WAY TO MAKE SURE THAT DOES NOT HAPPEN
MIGHT BE TO DO SOMETHING MILITARILY AGAINST THE PLO
WHICH WOULD PRECLUDE ANY CHANGE IN THEIR POSITION
TOWARD ISRAEL. THERE ARE OTHER POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS;
ALL I CAN SAY AT THIS POINT IS I AM AFRAID THE ISRAELIES
ARE QUITE SERIOUS.
LEWIS

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Message Attributes

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